

Robyn Richardson runs a wildlife shelter at North Byaduk and uses a similar 'soft release' policy. Again, many more Red-necked Wallabies have been cared for in recent years, with a lesser number of Black Wallabies. The Red-necked Wallabies are mostly derived from the Heywood, Mount Eccles and Homerton area. In this case the released wallabies could easily find their way to the stoney rise areas of the Harmans Valley and Mount Napier State Park, only 3 km distant.

A second possibility is that the Red-necked Wallabies from forests 25 km west of Mount Napier or from Mount Napier to the south (I saw the species there on 21 May 2011) are using the cover of Blue Gum *Eucalyptus globulus* plantations, established in south-west Victoria from 1997 (Bird 2004), to migrate to new habitats, including Mount Napier. From 1997 to 2003, 100 000 ha of Blue Gums were planted on farms (Bird 2004), with a concentration in the higher rainfall areas such as Byaduk, Macarthur, Branxholme and Digby. By 2007 that total increased by about 30%, after which the major prospectus companies failed and the industry faltered. The planting provided corridors and 'stepping stones' that wildlife might use to migrate across a previously cleared landscape. Whether that could be the case for the Red-necked Wallaby population at Mount Rouse, 20 km east of Mount Napier, is doubtful,

since there are no plantations nearby and there is a much greater discontinuity of cover on the cleared farmland.

It seems probable that Red-necked Wallabies have been deliberately released at Mount Rouse, where there is sufficient cover from planted trees, shrubs, garden weeds and remnant Tussock Grass *Poa labillardierei* to sustain the small population. Whatever the cause, it will be interesting to see what areas they will colonise in future years, or if they can retain a presence in the 'newer volcanics' landscape of the Mount Napier State Park.

References

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Forty-three years Ago

Friendly Rock Wallabies

These interesting notes are from Mr. A. G. Fellows of Alabama Hill, Charters Towers, North Queensland.

Over a period of twelve months we have won the trust of over thirty rock-wallabies that, instead of stampeding up our rocky hillside as once they did, now sit near our tool-shed door both in the early morning and late evening; or if not in sight, come bounding down just touching the rock tips when called by my wife or me as we break up stale bread loaves to throw to them. Soon the majority are sitting up straight, bread in paws, daintily though noisily munching away, heeding us very little, so that we often stand part surrounded by them, watching their antics. Occasional fights and chases occur between some individuals, whilst others make cat-like toilets after eating, and others drink daintily from the enamel water bowl which is often refilled for them.

From *The Victorian Naturalist* LXXXV, p. 90, April 4, 1968